

Missouri Department Of Natural Resources



Missouri Air Conservation Commission Operating Policies

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Purpose

Environmental statutes and regulations of the State of Missouri embody the goals of the people for protection of the environment and public health in a balanced manner consistent with economic growth. To achieve these goals, laws describe and assign powers and duties to the Department of Natural Resources and the environmental commissions and boards.

The operating policies set forth herein are intended to be adopted by all environmental commissions and boards having statutory responsibilities for programs of the Department of Natural Resources. The purpose of the policies is to promote a higher level of commission/board competence and independence, transparency and clarity in action, and predictability and consistency in processes, thus enhancing public trust and commission accountability. The term "commission" is understood to mean "commission", "board", "council", or "committee".

Statutes confer authority and responsibility specific to each commission and board; this document establishes an element of policy uniformity and consistency to the extent appropriate. It is expected that the policies adopted by each commission or board will be drafted and modified when necessary to reflect the requirements specific to that entity. In addition, the uniform policies will be modified as necessary to conform with changes in the law. Commission policies do not have the force and effect of law, and are not intended to set legally binding procedural rules.

Commission Structure

1. Authority and Powers

The discharge into the ambient air of air contaminants so as to cause or contribute to air pollution is contrary to the public policy of Missouri and in violation of the Missouri Air Conservation Law. It is the intent and purpose of this law to maintain purity of the air resources of the state to protect the health, general welfare and physical property of the people, maximum employment and the full industrial development of the state. The commission shall seek the accomplishment of this objective through the prevention, abatement and control of air pollution by all practical and economically feasible methods.

The commission shall have the following powers:

- a. Adopt, promulgate, amend and repeal rules and regulations.
- b. Grant, modify and revoke variances.
- c. Act upon request for a hearing or appeal.

The commission has the power to acquire information and services useful for carrying out its responsibilities through obtaining independent legal, technical or other professional support.

2. Members

The commission shall have a total of seven members who are appointed by the Governor and confirmed by the Missouri Senate.

At least three members shall represent agricultural, industrial and labor interests, respectively. No more than four of the members shall belong to the same political party and no two members shall be a resident of and domiciled in the same senatorial district.

Members shall serve for four years or until their successors are selected and qualified. There is no statutory limitation on the number of terms any appointed member may serve.

Members shall receive no compensation and shall be reimbursed for travel and other reasonable and necessary expenses incurred in the performance of their duties.

A member may resign from the commission with written notice to the Governor and the chair or applicable program director.

Any commission member absent from four regular commission meetings per calendar year for any cause shall be deemed to have resigned.

The governor may remove any appointed member for cause.

Where applicable, the governor may appoint a member for the remaining portion of the unexpired term created by a vacancy or the position may be filled according to other applicable law.

3. Officers

The members shall annually select from among themselves a chair and a vice chair. Commissions are encouraged to rotate the offices among the membership.

4. Staff

The Air Pollution Control Program and related state agencies provide the commission all necessary support the commission may require to carry out its powers and duties. Staff generally includes the program director, commission secretary, assistant attorney general and other personnel as needed.

5. Meetings

The commission shall routinely meet at least nine times a year, at times and places determined by the chair in consultation with staff and members of the commission. The commission should attempt to vary meeting locations and times to offer more opportunity for interested persons to attend.

The commission may hold special meetings as necessary to the timely performance of commission responsibilities. Special meetings may be called by three members of the commission upon delivery of written notice to each member of the commission.

Issues may arise from time to time that are of interest to more than one commission and its program. In such instances, commissions may hold joint meetings to discuss topics of mutual interest. Joint meetings may be called by the chairs of the two or more commissions in consultation with each program director.

The commission may, from time to time, tour facilities or locations of interest. Tours will have an agenda as with any other meeting. Consideration must be given to providing access to the public during the tour.

The commission may hold working meetings, at which no decisions are made, to discuss topics pertaining to the commission.

All meetings of the commission are subject to the provisions of Missouri's Sunshine Law.

Any motion to close the meeting shall cite the specific statutory exception or exceptions under which the closed meeting is being held. The number of staff attending the closed meeting should be limited to those members directly involved in the matter discussed. The time spent in a closed meeting should be as brief as necessary and the discussion limited to only the specific topic or topics for which the meeting was closed.

After a closed meeting the commission should return to open session. The chair should state the general topic of the discussion held during the closed session.

6. Agendas

An agenda is a tool to organize a meeting, to notify members, staff, and any interested parties about topics to be discussed, and to assist in the orderly conduct of a meeting.

All agendas will contain at a minimum:

- Name of the commission holding the meeting.
- Meeting time, date, location and phone number at the location (if possible).
- Notice that members of the public may ask to address any agenda item at the time it is discussed, together with instructions, if any, for signing a form or card to speak to an agenda item.
- A standing item to allow for public comment.
- Items for consideration: brief, but clear as to the topic.
- Anticipated action for each item such as: decision, no action-information only or further direction sought.
- An item to discuss or set future agendas.
- An item for future meetings.
- If a meeting is to contain a closed session in accordance with the Sunshine Law, a statement of when the closed session will be held and when the open session will be held.
- Contact information for the commission and program, referencing how copies of materials provided to commission members in preparation for the meeting may be requested.
- Other agenda items as appropriate, such as legislative updates or correspondence for commission members.
- Contact information for those with disabilities.

Where possible, preliminary agendas should be developed and provided, with the statement that the agenda is preliminary and subject to change.

Agenda items shall generally be determined by the program director in consultation with the commission chair. Any commissioner or a member of the public may request that an item be brought before the commission. Such requests should be received at least three weeks before a meeting.

Agendas for any meeting will be posted according to the provisions of the Sunshine Law as well as posting on department and Office of Administration (if available) websites. Agendas will be routinely provided to stakeholders who have requested to be placed on a mailing list, and to anyone requesting an agenda.

7. Conduct of Meetings

Roberts Rules of Order should be followed for the orderly conduct of commissions business and actions.

The work of the commission will be conducted with respect and courtesy toward the staff, interested parties and the public. Decision-making will reflect independence and impartiality, except that any member appointed to represent a specific interest may express the views of such interest.

Four of the members of the commission must appear in person or by electronic conference to constitute a quorum for the conduct of business. If there is no quorum, members may conduct a working meeting.

If a quorum is present, the affirmative vote of the majority of the members entitled to vote on the subject shall be the act of the commission. If taking a roll call vote, consider rotating the order of the roll call so that the same person is not always called to cast the first vote.

The commission welcomes information and views from all interested parties regarding the work of the commission. Members of the public shall be afforded the opportunity to comment on agenda items at the time they are addressed, and may be asked to sign a form or card to address the particular item. The commission may set reasonable time limits for public comments.

If it has been decided before the meeting how much time will be allowed for public comment (for example, 3 minutes per person) and how the order of speakers will be determined, that information should be placed on the agenda and stated at the beginning of the meeting. The chair should announce the procedures for public comment.

Records and Information

1. Meeting Materials

Materials that are provided to commission members for any meeting will also be made available to the public on request, unless the material relates to a closed meeting topic under The Missouri Sunshine Law. Materials can be made available either as hard copies or by electronic means.

Effort should be made to make the meeting materials available, especially those that will be relied upon for the meeting.

2. Minutes

The commission secretary will maintain minutes of commission meetings and draft minutes shall become final upon approval at a subsequent commission meeting.

3. Records

The commission shall maintain the types of records listed below. Except for records closed in accordance with Missouri's Sunshine Law, the records shall be made available to the general public. In addition, citizens can obtain copies of records upon request to the commission's custodian of records and payment of appropriate fees.

- Policies
- Meeting dates, times, places and agendas
- Minutes
- Meetings packet materials and handouts
- Rulemaking reports
- Regulatory Impact Reports
- Instruction on participation and submission of information
- Commission member contact information
- Pertinent correspondence
- Other materials utilized by the commission

Roles and Responsibilities

1. Commission Members

Each commission member represents the interest of the general public or of an interest group as set forth in the applicable statute. Members should facilitate open communication between the regulated community, interested groups, the general public and the department.

The authority of the commission rests in the commission as a whole, not in individual members. Members shall faithfully carry out the powers and duties placed upon them by law, which may include:

- Establishing policy and direction for the program.
- Rule-making in accordance with the laws and policies governing rule making.
- Approval of financing for capitol improvement projects.
- Performing a quasi-judicial function with respect to decisions on appeals.

Each commissioner is expected to attend training events in accordance with the Training for Commissioner's information contained in Appendix 2.

Each commissioner is expected to fully review the materials provided prior to each meeting.

2. Director of the Department of Natural Resources

By statute, the director of the Department of Natural Resources is directed to execute policies established by the commission and is subject to commission decisions as to all substantive and procedural rules. Department decisions are subject to appeal to the commission. The director is also responsible for recommending policies to the commission to achieve effective and coordinated environmental control.

3. Program Director

The program director is directly responsible to the commission and has primary responsibility for commission support and for implementation of commission decisions. The program director's responsibilities include meeting agendas, supporting materials, notices and logistics, presentations, analyses and rule development. According to Chapter 640, the program director is approved and may be removed or reassigned by the commission through a written request to the department director.

4. Commission Secretary and Program Staff

The commission secretary and program staff shall assist the program director. Program staff are appointed by the department director and are required to provide optimum service, efficiency and economy. Commissions should discuss staff issues with the program director.

5. Department of Natural Resources Legal Counsel

Legal counsel to the Department of Natural Resources shall provide counsel and support to the commission as necessary.

6. Attorney General's Office

An assistant attorney general may be assigned to provide legal counsel to the commission. The Office of the Attorney General:

- represents the State in matters referred by the commission.
- represents the commission in suits brought against the commission.
- represents the department in appeals.
- provides legal counsel to the commission.

An assistant attorney general addressing the commission should state who he or she is representing (the State, the commission or the department).

For assistance on the services provided, contact the Office of the Attorney General.

Appeal Hearings and Decisions

1. Appeal Hearings

For any agency decision that has been appealed to the commission, the commission shall request the Administrative Hearing Commission (AHC) to provide a hearing officer to conduct the hearing and handle all preliminary and discovery matters in accordance with applicable statutes, rules and procedures.

The Memorandum of Understanding shall govern remuneration and other arrangements for the services provided by the Administrative Hearing Commission.

2. Decision after Hearing

Following a hearing on an appeal, the hearing officer will provide the appeal record, findings of fact and conclusions of law, and recommendations to the commission. The commission shall hold a meeting as expeditiously as possible to decide the appeal.

The commission shall provide a reasonable time for oral argument upon the request of any affected parties.

The decision of the commission on the appeal shall be based on the facts and evidence in the hearing record. The commission shall issue a written decision including findings of facts and conclusions of law.

Appeal from a final decision of the commission may be filed in the manner provided by law.

A record of the decision in the appeal shall be preserved and shall be available to the public as provided by law.

Communications

1. Open Communication

Commission members will strive to solicit balanced viewpoints on significant issues. Members will be aware that hearing views from just one source (such as department staff, industry or environmental groups) may not adequately present the entire issue.

On rule-makings that are expected to be significant or controversial, the commissioners will encourage early input and involvement from all interested stakeholders, since waiting for the public hearing may be too late in the process to fully consider competing viewpoints.

Members of the public may address correspondence, written or electronic, to commission members or its program. Commission members receiving written or electronic correspondence pertinent to the commission will provide a copy to the commission chair and the program director for dissemination. The program will provide all commission members copies of correspondence concerning commission issues.

Individual commission members should not respond to correspondence on behalf of the commission.

Any commission member may request a copy of correspondence received by the department.

Commissions serve both a quasi-legislative and quasi-judicial role. Commission members will be open to all comments in the quasi-legislative role, such as comments related to rulemaking.

In the quasi-judicial role, commissioners recognize that they are acting as judges in appeals to the commission. In this capacity, members will strive to remain fair, independent, and open-minded. Commissioners will avoid both actual and perceived conflicts of interest in their quasi-judicial role and will avoid ex parte contact with other parties, including department staff, to pending disputes.

If a commissioner publicly takes or expresses a position on a specific issue, party or permit that later comes before the commission on an appeal, the commissioner will recuse himself on the record from any discussion, deliberation, or decision making on the issue.

2. Commission Contact

Each commission shall provide a means for public contact, generally including a phone number, address and email address.

3. Commission Webpage

The department will maintain a board and commission webpage that provides information on each commission and its members, contact information regarding the commission and its members and meeting agendas. Commissions are strongly encouraged to also post meeting minutes, public notices or other materials to provide for public access.

Compliance with Other Laws

1. Missouri's Sunshine Law

All activities of the commission shall be carried out in strict accordance with Missouri's Sunshine Law, RSMo Chapter 610. The commission shall honor the letter and the spirit of the Sunshine Law.

2. Personal Finance Disclosure

Each commissioner shall annually file a Personal Finance Disclosure Statement in accordance with RSMo Chapter 105, where appropriate.

3. Conflict of Interest

Commissioners shall comply with all applicable statutory requirements regarding conflict of interest, including RSMo Chapter 105.

4. Administrative Procedures

The commission shall comply with the rule-making and other applicable requirements of the Missouri Administrative Procedures Law, RSMo Chapter 536.

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Appendix 1

Regulatory Impact Report

The Commissioners' Core Workgroup endorsed this report in January 2004. Legislation codified the Regulatory Impact Report and requirements concerning the impacts of regulation on small businesses during the 2004 Legislative Session. The appropriate changes will be made to the Regulatory Impact Report guidelines and incorporated as Appendix 1 in the Board and Commission's Operating Policies.

Appendix 2

Training for Commissioners

Premise: Comprehensive knowledge and understanding of the commissioner's responsibilities and roles, as well as of the substantive laws and regulations governing each commissioner's respective program, is key to competent and consistent performance of commissioners.

1. New Commissioner Information

Upon appointment, each new commission/board member shall receive orientation from their respective commission/board and, at a minimum, a notebook containing copies of the following:

- a. The commission's/board's operating policies.
- b. The statutes and regulations governing the respective program and its authority, summarized as appropriate because of volume, including roles and responsibilities of the Staff Director and the Commission/Board.
- c. The Sunshine Law.
- d. The financial disclosure and conflict of interest statutes (Ethics Commission).
- e. Department of Natural Resources general information, including mission, list of commissions/boards, Department budget and organizational chart.
- f. Description of commissioner's quasi-judicial role (where appropriate).
- g. General overview of the rule-making process (where appropriate).
- h. A summary of the state revolving fund and the bond process (where appropriate).

2. Training (offered once a year)

Within 12 months following appointment, all new commission/board members shall attend a standardized training module. Other commission/board members are encouraged to attend one of the standardized training opportunities. Training modules may provide in-depth presentations on the subjects listed below:

- a. Rule-making process, including Regulatory Impact Report (RIR).
- b. MoDNR Budget.
- c. Quasi-judicial role.
- d. Policies.
- e. Services of the Attorney General's Office.
- f. Sunshine Law.
- g. Financial disclosure laws and conflicts of interest.

- h. Authority of commissions/boards.
- i. Organizational structure.
- j. Permits process.

Alternate means (electronic, etc.) of training will be provided for new members unable to physically attend a comprehensive training session.

3. Commissioners Conference (to be held every two years)

All commission/board members will be expected to attend a biennial one-day conference that will provide:

- a. Updated training refresher sessions (one-half day).
- b. Issues seminar in break-out sessions (one-half day). The Department, environmental groups, business/industry groups, legislators and other interested parties will be invited to give presentations on relevant issues pertinent to the commissions/boards.

4. Training Providers

Planning for the training events will be managed by the Outreach and Assistance Center in consultation with commission/board chairs, representative Division and Program Directors, and external constituencies. Presentations of the various topics at the training sessions will be provided, as appropriate, by:

- a. The Director's Office and Outreach and Assistance Center.
- b. Program staff.
- c. The Attorney General's Office.
- d. The Ethics Commission.
- e. Environmental groups.
- f. Business/industry groups.
- g. Agencies or groups representing the general public.
- h. The Environmental Protection Agency (EPA).
- i. Other federal or state agencies.
- j. Environmental Improvement and Energy Resources Authority (EIERA).

5. Training Costs

- a. Training and incidental tasks by MoDNR and other state personnel will be provided by existing personnel as part of their work assignments.
- b. Costs of information notebooks, incidentals, travel, meals and lodging will be borne by each respective program for its commission/board member.

- c. Logistic costs of meeting place and incidentals will be borne by the Department.
- d. Members of the public attending the training shall bear their own costs.